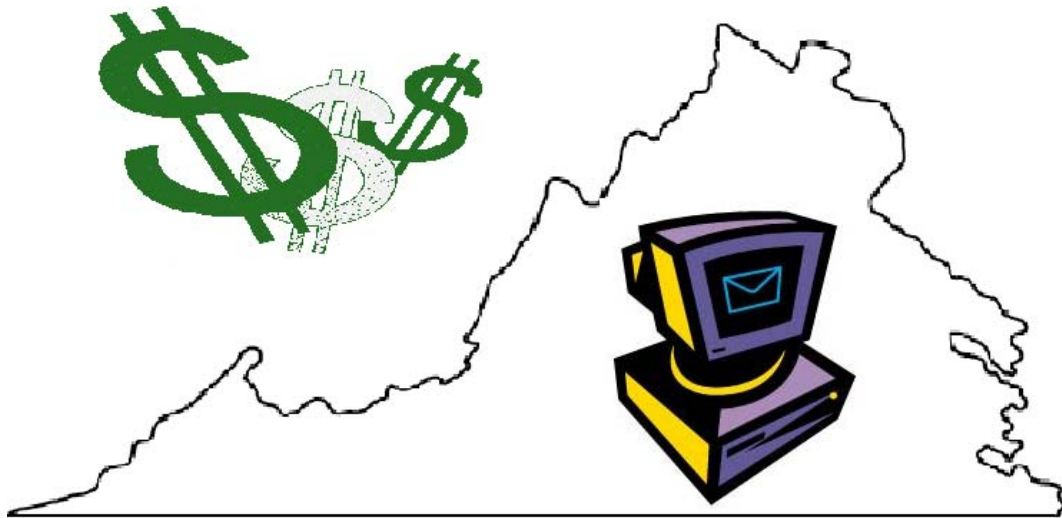


# *VA Filing*

*Version 3.17*



## *User Handbook*

*Updated  
January 12, 2009*

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## Section 1: INTRODUCTION

The Virginia State Board of Elections (SBE) has developed software – known as VAFiling – that enables candidates and committees to record financial transactions and to electronically file (e-file) required disclosure reports. In addition to e-filing, VAFiling can generate paper reports, which can be submitted by local candidates who elect to file on paper. There is no cost for using VAFiling. SBE has designed the software as a report writer with limited capabilities for managing data beyond filing required contribution and expense reports. Candidates or committees whose needs call for more comprehensive campaign management software may want to contact one of the vendors whose products have been found to be compatible with SBE e-filing specifications. The approved vendor list can be found at the SBE Web site: [http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Candidates\\_Committees/Electronic\\_Filing/Approved\\_Vendors.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Candidates_Committees/Electronic_Filing/Approved_Vendors.html)

Since its introduction in 1999, VAFiling has gone through several revisions. The latest edition – VAFiling Version 3.17 – was released July 30, 2008.

The software is designed to operate on personal computers running Microsoft Windows® operating systems: Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows NT, Windows ME, Windows 2000, Windows XP and Windows Vista. Your computer must be at least a 486, have at least 8MB RAM, a processor with at least 66MHz, and at least 5MB free disk space.

## Section 1.1 - DOWNLOAD ACCESS

The installation file is available by free download from the website of the State Board of Elections. Before they can file campaign finance disclosure reports electronically, committees first must indicate their intent to e-file in their Statement of Organization for a [political committee](#) or a [candidate committee](#). The intent to e-file may be stated in a committee's initial SOO at the time the committee is formed or later by filing an amended SOO.

Candidates for state office and political committees should mail a Statement of Organization to: Campaign Finance Division, Virginia State Board of Elections, Suite 101, 200 North 9th Street, Richmond, VA 23219-3485. Local candidates should submit a Statement of Organization to their local voter registrar's office. Local candidates who wish to file electronically must also submit a Statement of Organization to the State Board of Elections. Upon request, the local electoral board may fax a copy of the Statement to SBE. It is the ultimate responsibility for the candidate to ensure that the Statement is submitted to SBE to ensure that the candidate is able to submit its reports electronically. SBE will send the committee an acknowledgement email to confirm that the candidate is able to file electronically.

Once your form has been processed, the Campaign Finance Division will email the Committee ID and Security Code to the committee's authorized officer

## Section 1.2 - DOWNLOADING THE INSTALLATION FILE

Once you are on the download page, click on the link that says:

[Download VAFiling](#)

This will initiate the transfer of the file that you will need to install the VAFiling software on your PC. Once you begin the transfer, you should get a prompt – you should select “Run” or “Open” the file. Size of the file is approximately 5 MB and download times will vary depending on the speed of the connection.

- Cable connections will take up to 1 minute.
- DSL connections will take up to 5 min.
- Dial-up connections could take over an hour.

Follow the instructions on the download page.

Note: You may also request a CD-Rom if you do not wish to download the file from the Internet. This might be the preferred method if you have a dial-up connection. CD-ROM purchases include a \$6.00 charge for shipping and handling. Please contact the Campaign Finance Division of the State Board of Elections in Richmond at 804-864-8901 or Toll-Free at 800.552.9745.

## Section 1.3 - INSTALLING THE SOFTWARE

Once you have saved the installation file on your hard-drive, installing the software should take only a few minutes. Follow the steps below:

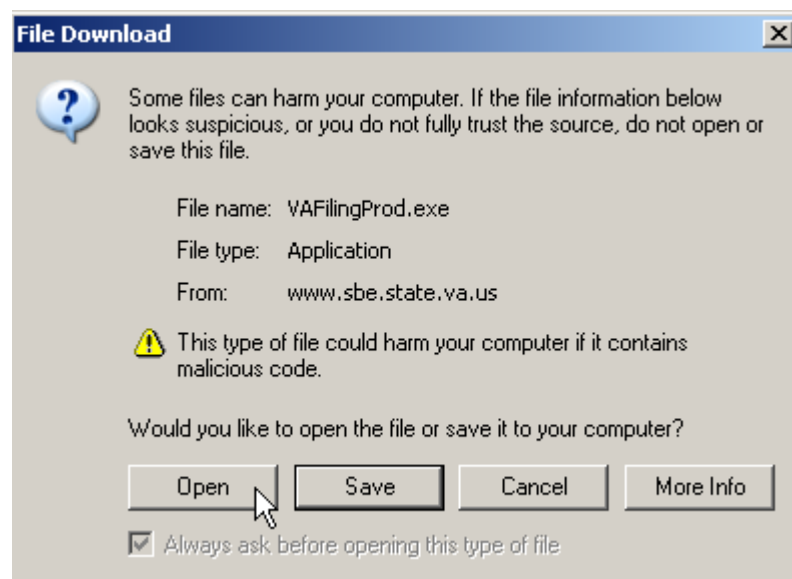
**Step 1:** Close all programs running on your computer.

STEP 2: Now, click on the link to download the setup program as shown below:

**[Download Setup Program for VA Filing - Version 3.17](#)**

STEP 3: This will bring up the File Download box. When the File Download box appears (see below), you must click on the button that allows you to OPEN the file from the current location. Go ahead and click the OPEN button as shown in the figure below.

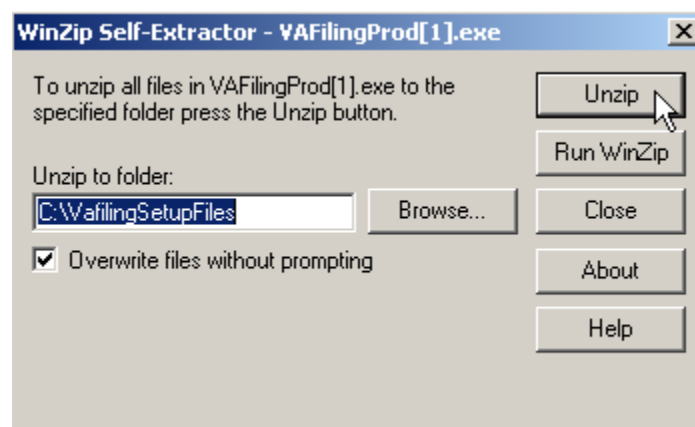
**Please Note:** the screen you see may be a little different depending on the type of Microsoft Windows operating system you use, Please select the option of opening the file from the current location by clicking the OPEN button. Sometimes you will see a WARNING message as shown below, please ignore it and proceed further. After you click OPEN as shown below, The Actual download of the VA Filing Setup Program will start.



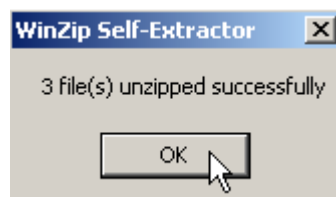
STEP 4: While the file is being downloaded you will see a blue bar indicating the amount of download completed as shown below.



STEP 5: After the VA Filing Setup file download is complete then you will automatically see the **WinZip Self-Extractor** window come up. Click on the **UNZIP** button as shown in the figure below.



STEP 6: You will now see a message telling you that the files have been unzipped successfully.

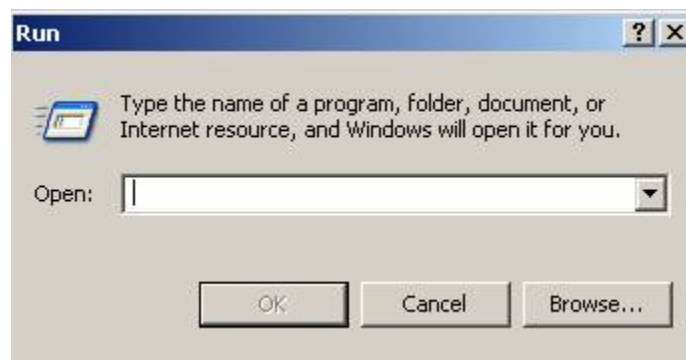


STEP 7: Click **Close** to close the WinZip Self-Extractor window as shown in the figure below.

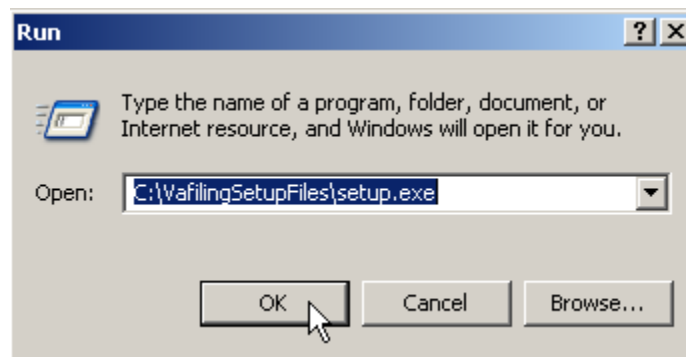




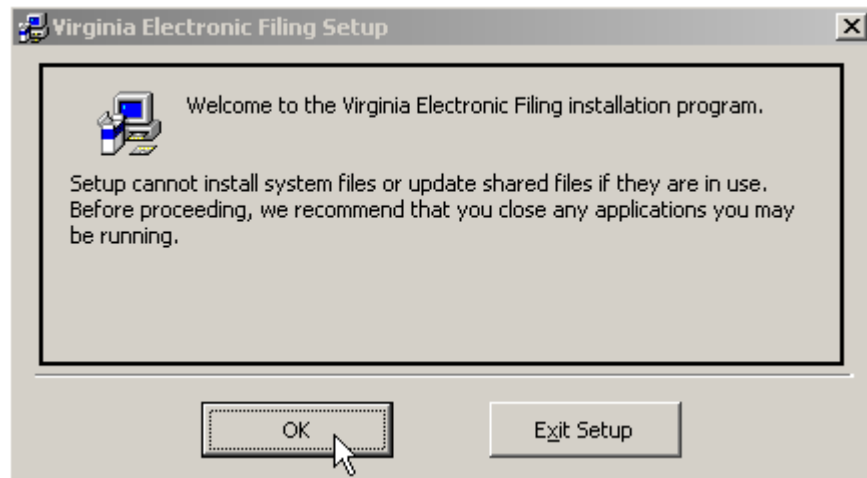
STEP 8: Bring up the Window's Start Menu by clicking the **START** button the bottom left hand corner of the screen. When the Start menu pops up select or click on **RUN**, then the Run window will pop up as shown in the figure below.



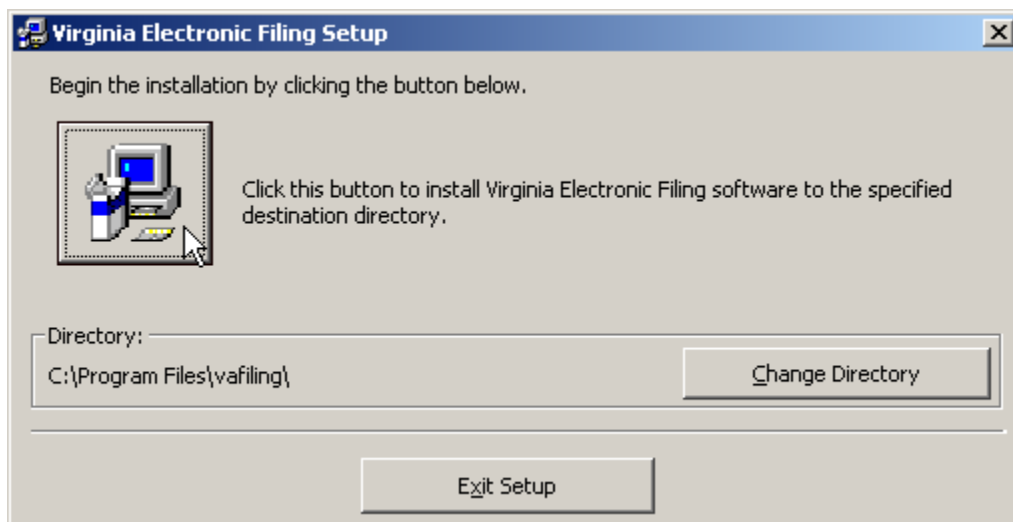
STEP 9: Type **C:\VafilingSetupFiles\setup.exe** into the Open Text box as shown in the figure below and after you are done entering the information click **OK** as shown in the figure below:



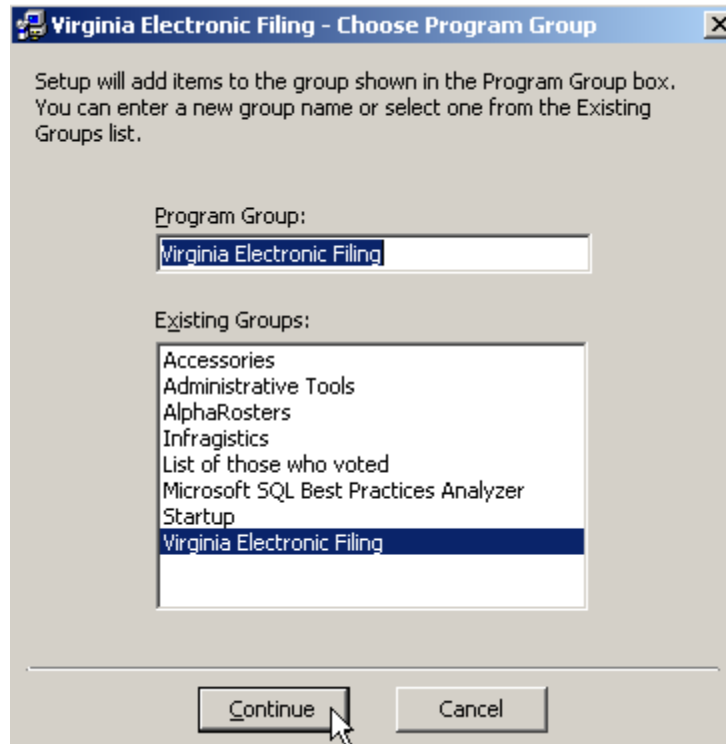
STEP 10: Once you click **OK** as indicated above, the VA Filing Program Setup screen will pop up as shown below. Click **OK** to begin installation as shown below:



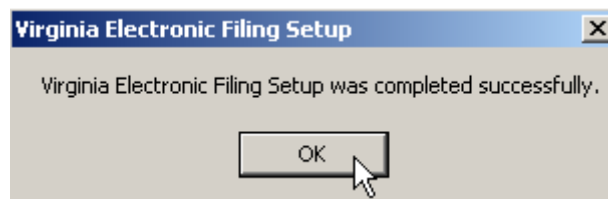
STEP 11: After clicking OK on the above screen, the VA Filing Setup window 2 appears as shown below. Click on the button as shown in the figure below:



STEP 12: Next click on the button **Continue** as shown in the figure below.



STEP 13: Just click OK to complete the setup program



STEP 14: The Installation of the VA Filing Program has been completed.

**Problems with Installation?** Read the instructions carefully and repeat the process. If you continue to have problems, email your questions to [cfda@sbe.virginia.gov](mailto:cfda@sbe.virginia.gov) or [support@vpap.org](mailto:support@vpap.org).

## Section 2: GETTING STARTED

The instructions below will help you create a database in which you will store all financial transactions that must be disclosed under the Virginia Campaign Finance Disclosure Act.

### Section 2.1 - Creating a Database

Once you have installed VAFiling on your PC, the first step will be to create a file – or “database” – where you will store your committee’s financial transactions: receipts, expenditures, loans, etc.

You will continue using this same database as long as your candidate or committee is required to report information to the State Board of Elections.

To launch the software, click on START → PROGRAMS → VAFILING.

Once the software is open, click on the FILE menu across the top and select NEW. This will lead to a dialogue box where you will be asked to enter a file name. In naming the file, select the last name of your candidate or the name/acronym of your political committee. Click SAVE.

Your database will reside in the following folder: c:\program files\vafileing.

#### **\*\* VAFiling Tip \*\***

One of the most common mistakes made by new users is to assume you should create a new database for each filing period or election year. This is not true. You should continue using this same database as long as the candidate is running or the committee is open.

As you will see, this will make the treasurer’s job easier by preventing them from having to re-type the basic information for repeat contributors or payees and provide the candidate or committee with a single repository of its financial transactions.

### Section 2.1 – Live Report Code Update

Prior to entering any data into VAFiling you should ensure that your report codes and filing periods are updated. SBE updates filing periods and report codes regularly, so you should run the Live Report Code Update regularly.

To do this:

**Step 1:** Click File

**Step 2:** Click “Live Report Code Update”

The program will automatically update your report codes and filing periods.

### Section 2.3 - Establishing a “Profile”

Once you have created a database, the software will lead you to the “Profile” screen (shown below). Here is where you will list the official name of your committee, address, bank depository and other important information.

**Committee Profile**

Name of Committee/Organization:

Committee/Campaign Registration ID Number:

Street Address Line One:

Street Address Line Two:

Street Address Line Three:

City:  State:  Zip:

Treasurer's Name:

Security Code:

Itemization Threshold: ☒ Itemize if Aggregate is Over \$100.00 (VA Law) ☐ Itemize if Aggregate is  or More ☐ Itemize All Contributions

Cycle Begin Date:

Type of Candidate:

Filing Period:

Bank Name(s):

Preset Values... Update and Close

Many of the entries on this form are identical to the information requested on the cover sheet of SBE's paper forms for campaign finance reports. However, there are several important features that are unique to the software and/or electronic filing.

## Section 2.4 - Committee/Campaign Registration ID Number

The Virginia State Board of Elections assigns a Registration ID Number to each candidate committee or political committee that submits a Statement of Organization. The "Registration ID Number" is a critical piece of information for candidates and committees that e-file. Entering this number correctly will assist in the security of your electronic transmission and ensure your committee gets credit for timely filings.

In late 2004, the State Board of Elections introduced new Registration ID Numbers for candidate committees. Once you install Version 3.15 and open a database with an old candidate ID, VAFiling will automatically update your ID from the State Board of Elections Web site.

**Note:** This feature is required only if a candidate or a committee plans to file electronically. Local candidates that do not e-file can leave this line blank.

If your committee is registered with the State Board of Elections and you do not know your Registration ID Number, please contact the Campaign Finance Division of the State Board of Elections in Richmond at 804-864-8901 or Toll-Free at 800.552.9745.

### **\*\* VAFiling Tip \*\***

*Political committees should drop the "VA" from their committee ID number. For example, a political committee with the ID "VA09-450" should list the ID as "09-450"*

## Section 2.5 - Security Code

The Virginia State Board of Elections assigns a Security Code to each committee that indicates it intends to file reports electronically. The Security Code serves as an electronic signature; the same way your PIN number allows you to access ATM transactions. It is essential for you to enter this number correctly. For your security, SBE will automatically reject an e-filed report without a Security Code.

**Note:** This feature is required only if a candidate or a committee plans to file electronically. Local candidates that do not e-file can leave this line blank.

If you are already registered and do not know your Security Code, contact the Campaign Finance Division of the State Board of Elections in Richmond at 804-864-8901 or Toll-Free at 800.552.9745.

## Section 2.6 - Itemization Threshold

State law requires candidate reports to list the name, address and occupation of all donors who have given more than \$100 in cash and in-kind gifts during an election cycle. State law imposes the same requirements for political committees for donors that have given more than \$100 in a calendar year.

With VAFiling, you should enter in the name and address of all donors into your database, even those who give \$100 or less. The names of small donors will remain confidential and will not be included in reports sent to SBE.

VAFiling allows you to specify whether the reporting threshold is the state minimum or another figure. You can choose one of the following:

### *Itemize if Aggregate is Over \$100*

The default option is the minimum disclosure required under Virginia law, which requires itemization when a donor's contribution for an election cycle exceeds \$100. (With this option, the name of a contributor who has given a total of \$100 will not be listed in your report. However, the program will automatically itemize as soon as a donor's total reaches \$100.01.)

### *Itemize if Aggregate is \$\_\_ or More*

The second option allows candidates and political committees to continue the common practice of going beyond the state's minimum disclosure standard. Many campaigns list donors who give \$100 or more. If you wish to choose this option, click on the button to the left of the selection and type the desired threshold into the form.

### *Itemize All Contributions*

The second option allows candidates and political committees to go beyond the state reporting requirements and to list the name of all contributors, regardless of the amount.

**Note: If the committee chooses to report all contributions, it is imperative that the committee inform their donors that even small dollar contributions will be reported publicly.**

### **\*\* VAFiling Tip \*\***

*While few candidates select the "itemize all contributions" option for reports to the State Board of Elections or local authority, it is a handy feature for in-house purposes. For instance, if a candidate asks for a list of EVERYONE who has donated during the last month, the treasurer can create a customized report for the candidate by using the "itemize all contributions" option. The treasurer should reset the itemization threshold to its normal setting when they are preparing their next report.*

## Section 2.7 - Cycle Begin Date

As stated earlier, candidate committees and political committees should continue to use the same database from reporting period to reporting period and from year to year. The “Cycle Begin Date” feature allows candidates to specify the beginning point of the *current* election cycle or for political committees to specify the starting point of the current calendar year. Selecting the proper begin date will ensure an accurate computation of each donor’s aggregate contributions.

### ***Determining the “Cycle Begin Date”***

The guidelines below will help you select the correct “Cycle Begin Date.”

- Political committees simply enter the first day of the current reporting year as the “Cycle Begin Date.” For instance, a committee reporting contributions in 2009 should enter “01/01/2009.”
- Candidates running for an office for the first time should enter the first date they began receiving contributions as the “Cycle Begin Date.”
- Candidates running for the same office in consecutive elections must enter the first day in January following the last General Election for the office sought. For example, a Senate candidate who ran in the November 2005 General Election and plans to run again in November 2009 should enter their Cycle Begin Date as “01/01/2006”
- Candidates who won/lost an election and may not run for the same office again, but who have not provided a final accounting of their funds, shall enter the first day in January following the last General Election for the same office. For example, a House of Delegates candidate that lost in the November 2008 election but still has a campaign account open as of January 1, 2009 should enter a Cycle Begin Date of 01/01/2009. Candidates who have not provided a final report and have not closed out their accounts must continue to file on an Election Year schedule prescribed by SBE.

**Important Note:** Entering the Cycle Begin Date of the next cycle is not a declaration of candidacy and does not imply a candidate’s intent to seek re-election or run again.

### ***\*\* VAFiling Tip \*\****

*Candidates who began using VAFiling after the “Begin Date” of the current year/cycle must keypunch all donations dating to the start of the election cycle. The same is true for political committees who begin using the software after already having filed at least one report that covers part of the current year.*

## Section 2.8 - Type of Committee

From the pull-down menu, please select the appropriate description of your candidate/committee and the year of the next election. Candidates running in a special election or for an office not listed in the pull-down menu should select “All Others.”

Once you select or change the “Type of Candidate,” the software will prompt you to select a “Filing Period” which is described below.



## Section 2.9 - Filing Period

The “Filing Period” is one option that will change after each reporting deadline is completed. Version 3.17 comes loaded with all the known filing periods through 2010. The software also includes a feature that allows users with an Internet connection to download the latest filing periods by clicking on FILE → LIVE REPORT CODE UPDATE.

You can change the reporting period at any time, such as when you need to amend a past report. You also can create a customized filing period by clicking on ADD DATA → ADD NEW FILING PERIODS.

When you select a reporting period for the first time or later change the reporting period, the program automatically will prompt you to adjust what are known as “Preset Values” that are used to compile your summary schedules. See below for more details.

## Section 2.10 - Preset Values

SBE’s campaign finance reports include two summary schedules (G and H) that detail the amount raised and spent during the filing period and, cumulatively, during the election cycle or calendar year. The summary schedules include five key numbers (known as “Preset Values”) that the program needs in order to calculate the correct balances and cumulative totals.

Version 3.17 can remember your Preset Values from one filing period to the next. However, committees using VAFiling for the first time must enter these numbers manually in the first report they generate.

There are three ways to access the “Preset Values” screen:

1. Click on Jump! and click on the “PRESET VALUES” button.
2. Click on ADD DATA → PRESET VALUES.
3. From the Profile, changing the “Type of Candidate” or “Filing Period” will automatically take you to the “Preset Values” screen.

**Preset Values**

**Balance at Start of Election Cycle**  
For candidates, enter the balance of your campaign account at the end of the previous election cycle. This value should be zero for candidates seeking an office for the first time. For political committees, enter the balance of your account at the end of the previous calendar year. New committees should enter zero.

Balance at Start of Election Cycle: 5000.00

---

**Preset Values**  
Select the reporting period immediately preceeding the period selected in the Profile:

Selected Filing Period: **October 21, 2004 - December 31, 2004**

Previous Filing Period: July 1, 2004 - October 20, 2004

Beginning loan balance (Ending Loan Balance from last report): 500

Beginning Balance (Ending Balance from last report): 5500.00

Total Receipts from last report (Total receipts this election cycle): 700.00

Previous Disbursement Totals (Total disbursements this election cycle): 200.00

OK Close

**Step 1:** Double-check to make sure the “Selected Filing Period,” which is shown in blue letters, is correct.

**Step 2:** Select the most recent filing period from the pull-down menu.

**Note:** Committees using the software for the first time will have no previous period to select and show leave this blank.

**Step 3:** Confirm the five preset values are the same as they appear on your most recent report. For new committees filing for the first time, all five numbers should be zero.

Balance at Start of Election Cycle

**Note:** This is the cash balance as of the “cycle begin date” selected on the Profile screen. This number will appear on Schedule H, Line 21 and will not change until the next election cycle begins.

Beginning Loan Balance (Schedule G -- Line 15 from most recent report)

Beginning Balance (Schedule H -- Line 19 from most recent report)

Total Receipts from last report (Schedule H -- Line 24 from most recent report.)

Previous Disbursement Totals (Schedule H -- Line 28 from most recent report.)

**Note:** For political committees, the last two numbers should be zero for the first report of a calendar year. For candidates, the last two numbers should be zero on the first report an election cycle.

**Step 4:** Click OK.

### Section 2.11 - Balance at Start of Election Cycle

Starting in 2004, each political committee and each candidate has been assigned a specific “begin date” for each election cycle. Committees run on calendar year cycles, so the starting date is always January 1 of the year in which the activity takes place. The “start” date for candidates who have run for the same office before is January 1 of the year following the year in which the last election for that office was held. The “start” date for candidates running for an office for the first time is the date they begin receiving contributions.

For “Balance at Start of Election Cycle,” enter the cash balance that the candidate or committee had in its campaign account on the “cycle begin date.” This number will appear on Schedule H, Line 21. You do not need to change this number until the beginning of the next cycle.

**NOTE:** Only on the first report filed in each new election cycle should the “Beginning Balance” equal the “Balance at Start of Election Cycle.”

### Section 2.12 – Starting a New “Election Cycle”

After a political committee completes a calendar year and files the January 15 report or after a candidate completes an election cycle and files the January 15 report, the user will need to follow several steps:

1. Go to the Profile and select a new “Type of Candidate.”

- Political committees will select the next calendar year. (For example, a political committee that has filed reports for all transactions that took place in 2008 will change from “Political Committee in 2008” to “Political Committee in 2009.”)
- Candidates will select the election cycle when the office they sought will next be on the ballot. (For example, a House of Delegates candidate who ran for a two-year term in November 2007 will change from “Candidates in November 2007” to “Candidates in November 2009”)

**Note:** Candidates must advance to the next cycle, even if they do not intend to be on the ballot at the next election. This is not a declaration of candidacy, but an administrative requirement.

2. Once a user changes the “type of candidate,” VAFiling will prompt them to change two other variables:

- Cycle Begin Date: For political committees, this will always be the first day of the calendar year. For candidate committees, this will be January 1 of the year following the year in which the last election for that office was held.
- Filing Period: The first filing period of a year/cycle should start on the same date as the Cycle Begin Date. Please consult with SBE on the appropriate filing schedule.

Click “Update and Close”

3. Once a user changes the “type of candidate” and seeks to close the Profile screen, VAFiling will prompt the user to the Preset Values screen and request they select the “previous filing period.” (See Section 2.9 for a detailed explanation)

Once the “previous filing period is selected,” the program will make these changes:

- The ending balance of the last report will become both the “Balance at Start of Election Cycle” and “Beginning Balance” of the current report.
- The ending loan balance of the last report will be carried forward.
- The total raised/spent numbers will be reset to zero, so that accurate totals can begin accruing for the new year/election cycle.

Click OK to save changes.

## Section 3: Navigation Features

This section contains basic navigation features that will be familiar to those who are accustomed to Microsoft Windows® operating systems.

### Section 3.11- Creating a Desktop Shortcut

Once you have installed VAFiling on your PC, you should create an icon on your Windows desktop to make it easier to open the program. Follow the steps below:

1. Launch Windows Explorer (START → MY COMPUTER) and locate the following directory:  
**c:\program files\vafileing**.
2. Look for a file called **VAFiling.exe** (it's the one with the image of a floppy disk beside it).
3. Right click on **VaFiling.exe**. In the resulting menu, select the **Create Shortcut** option. The system creates a file with the name **Shortcut to VAFiling.exe**.
4. Left click on the shortcut file and, while holding down the mouse, drag and drop the shortcut icon onto the desktop.

### Section 3.2 - Navigation Basics

VAFiling gives you a variety of ways to move from task to task. Some users may prefer navigating with the mouse to activate pull-down menus and make selections. Some users may wish to use the keyboard to make selections. Still others might want to use a combination of mouse and keyboard.

*Using the Mouse: The file menu is displayed across the top of the screen -- File, Jump!, Add Data, View/Edit, Prepare C&E Report, Window, Help*

Click on any item to reveal a pull-down menu of additional choices.

#### Using the Keyboard

Each item in the menu bar has one underlined letter, such as Add Data.

To display the options under Add Data, type ALT-A. Each of the choices, in turn, has one letter underlined. Use the ALT key to make your selection, such as ALT-D to choose "D - Expenditures."

#### Using the Keyboard and Mouse

The Jump! menu provides one screen from which to click on choices without going to the individual menu options. Type ALT-J to display the Jump! Menu, shown below:

The screenshot shows a window titled "VAFiling Jumps" with a blue header. Below the header, there are three buttons: "Committee Profile..." (highlighted with a dashed border), "Preset Values...", and "Close". The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Post Receipts:**
  - Contributions:**
    - Cash: Add View/Edit
    - In-Kind: Add View/Edit
    - Unitemized: Add View/Edit
  - Rebates, Refunds, Interest:** Add View/Edit
  - Loans:** Add View/Edit
- Post Disbursements:**
  - Expenditures:** Add View/Edit
  - Loans:** Add View/Edit
  - Surplus Funds:** Add View/Edit
- Post Outstanding Debts:** Add View/Edit
- Review CFDA Summary:** View Only

To close this window:

Click anywhere on the VA Filing screen or enable one of the **Add** or **View/Edit** or **Profile** buttons on the menu. The system closes this Jump window and displays the appropriate screen requested.

## Section 4: ENTERING DATA

VAFiling includes a separate data-entry screen for each reporting schedule (A through I) in SBE's disclosure forms. Each of these screens can be accessed through the main toolbar, by clicking ADD DATA → (SELECT SCHEDULE).

### **\*\* VAFiling Tip \*\***

*Candidates who began using VAFiling after the "Begin Date" of the current year/cycle must keypunch all donations dating to the start of the election cycle. The same is true for political committees who begin using the software after already having filed at least one report that covers part of the current year.*

### **Section 4.1 - General Guidelines**

In the days of paper disclosure, campaign treasurers had to keep "two" sets of contribution books. They would keep one list of contributions greater than \$100 and a second list of contributions of \$100 or less. Several times a year, they would have to copy -- either by hand or with a typewriter -- the names, addresses and occupations of the "big" donors onto SBE's reporting forms.

VAFiling saves you time by consolidating all financial information into a single list. You should enter all donations, even those from donors who fall below the itemization threshold. (Typing the names of small donors into your database will not cause this information to be disclosed to the public.) Entering all donations now will save many hours in the future and give you a single database of donors, which can be used in a mail merge.

Entering all donors also makes sense because adding subsequent donations takes only a few keystrokes. Each of the major schedules has a labor saving function that searches for donors and vendors who already have been entered into your database. The aqua-shaded window is activated as information is typed into the last name field. The look-up window for Schedule A is shown below:

**Schedule A - Cash Contributions**

All donors whose contributions' aggregate exceeds \$100 during an election cycle will be itemized and reported to the Virginia State Board of Elections. This program will compile aggregates of each donor, provided the full name, city and zip code match exactly. To ensure perfect matches, use the lookup feature for repeat contributors.

Last Name (or Company Name)	First and Middle Names	Suffix	Title
Jones	Richard A	Jr.	

**Jones, Richard A Jr., 421 Main St., Suffolk, VA, 22102, Jones Homebuilders LLC, Construction, Suffolk**  
**Jones, Sylvia, 2091 Grand Concourse, Baileys Crossroads, VA, 22018, US Navy, Defense Analyst, A**

Street Address - First Line		Occupation /Type of Business	
421 Main St		Construction	
Street Address - Second Line		Name of Employer(Individuals Only)	
		Jones Homebuilders LLC	
City	State	Zip Code	City/State of Employment
Suffolk	VA (Virginia)	22102	Suffolk, VA

Date Received	Dollar Amount

Memo (not reported):

OK Clear Exit

The program displays persons or companies that match the name you are entering. If you find a match, simply click on the selection in the look-up window, and all the contributor/vendor's information -- name, address, occupation -- will fill the screen. In most cases, all you need to enter is the date and amount of the new transaction.

The State Board of Elections strongly recommends using this look-up feature to add subsequent transactions from previously identified donors and vendors. Using the look-up will eliminate typos and ensure that VAFiling calculates aggregate contributions in an accurate way.

Each schedule contains a "memo" field that is for your internal purposes only. The information in this field is never, under any circumstances, reported to the State Board of Elections. You can use this field to record notes and other proprietary information about a particular donor or vendor. Some committees take advantage of the "Memo" field to record the name of their PAC contact, salutation or other information that can be used in a mail merge.

**\*\* VAFiling Tip \*\***

**Dollar Amounts:** Enter numbers without the dollar sign; the program will add the dollar sign. Whole dollar contributions do not require decimals. (Example: You receive a check for \$100. Enter as 100. The program will convert this to \$100.00)

**Dates:** Can be entered in a variety of ways -- April 1, 2008; April 1, 08; 04/01/2008 or 4/1/08. The computer will convert each of these entries to: "04/01/2008"



## Section 4.2 - Schedule A - Cash Contributions

This schedule is used to record those donations of money in cash, check or credit card. For more information on Schedule A please visit SBE's website.

### Candidates:

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Candidates\\_Committees/Laws\\_Policies/Candidate\\_Campaign\\_Committee\\_Law\\_Policy\\_Summary.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Candidates_Committees/Laws_Policies/Candidate_Campaign_Committee_Law_Policy_Summary.html)

### Political Committees:

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Candidates\\_Committees/Laws\\_Policies/Political\\_Committee\\_Summary\\_on\\_the\\_Laws\\_Policies.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Candidates_Committees/Laws_Policies/Political_Committee_Summary_on_the_Laws_Policies.html)

There are three ways you can get to the Enter Schedule A screen:

5. Click on **ADD DATA** → **A: CASH CONTRIBUTIONS** on the Menu.
6. Press <Alt><A> on your keyboard to display the drop down menu. Then press <A>.
7. Press <Alt><J> on your keyboard to display the Jump! menu. Click on "Add" Cash Contributions.

### Required Fields

The data entry screen (see Section 4.1) contains fields for all the information required by the State Board of Elections. VAFiling will not accept entries without all the necessary information. If you try to enter an incomplete contribution, a prompt will appear telling you what information is needed.

### Occupation/Employer

For corporate and PAC contributors, the "Employer/Business" field should be left blank.

When entering donations from retirees, you can enter "Retired" in the OCCUPATION field and enter "n/a" in the EMPLOYER and PLACE OF BUSINESS field. The same can apply when entering donations from homemakers or students.

In an ideal world, candidates and committees would gather the occupation/employer information for each donor as the checks were received. SBE recognizes that in the real world checks arrived unsolicited or without occupation information requested. In some cases, you may receive donations by entering small-dollar donations from individuals and companies you know little about.

If the amount is more than \$100, you must contact the donor to obtain the necessary information. If you cannot reach the donor, you should send the donor a letter explaining that you are required to provide their occupation/employer information and formally request the information from them. Copies of such letters, preferably in Microsoft Word, should be submitted with your report. (E-filers should attach copies of the letters in their email. Paper filers should include copies of the letters with their reports.)

If the amount from a donor whose occupation/employer is not known falls below \$100, you can simply type an "N/A" in the "occupation", "employer" and "place of business fields." This "N/A" will serve as a placeholder if/until subsequent gifts lift the donor's aggregate over \$100. At that time, you can do the research necessary to determine the donor's occupation, employer and city/state location of their employer. If you cannot reach the donor, you should send the donor a letter explaining that you are required to provide his occupation/employer information and formally request the information from him. Copies of such letters, preferably in Microsoft Word, should be submitted with your report. (E-filers should attach copies of the letters in their email. Paper filers should include copies of the letters with their reports.)

**Best Practices:** Please distinguish between a donor's "title" and "occupation." For example, the vice president of Roanoke Roofing Corp. should not have her occupation listed as "vice president." A better description would be "Roofing Contractor."

### Section 4.3 - Schedule B - In-Kind Contributions

This schedule is used to record donations of goods and services, such as free office space, flight across the state or office equipment.

**Candidates:**

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Candidates/Committees/Laws\\_Policies/Candidate\\_Campaign\\_Committee\\_Law\\_Policy\\_Summary.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Candidates/Committees/Laws_Policies/Candidate_Campaign_Committee_Law_Policy_Summary.html)

**Political Committees:**

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Candidates/Committees/Laws\\_Policies/Political\\_Committee\\_Summary\\_on\\_the\\_Laws\\_Policies.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Candidates/Committees/Laws_Policies/Political_Committee_Summary_on_the_Laws_Policies.html)

There are three ways you can get to the Enter Schedule B screen:

1. Click on **ADD DATA** → **B: IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS** on the Menu.
2. Press <Alt><A> on your keyboard to display the drop down menu. Then press <B>.
3. Press <Alt><J> on your keyboard to display the Jump! menu. Click on "Add" In-Kind Contributions.

**Schedule B - In-Kind Contributions**

All donors whose contributions' aggregate exceeds \$100 during an election cycle will be itemized and reported to the Virginia State Board of Elections. This program will compile aggregates of each donor, provided the full name, city and zip code match exactly. To ensure perfect matches, use the lookup feature for repeat contributors.

Last Name (or Company Name)	First and Middle Names	Suffix	Title
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>			
<input type="button" value="OK"/> <input type="button" value="Clear"/> <input type="button" value="Exit"/>			
Street Address - First Line		Occupation/Type of Business	
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	
Street Address - Second Line		Location of Employment	
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	
City		State	Zip Code
<input type="text"/>	VA (Virginia)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Date Received		Dollar Amount	Basis Used To Determine Value
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Memo (not reported): <input type="text"/>			

### Required Fields

The data entry screen (displayed above) contains fields for all the information required for State Board of Elections reports. VAFiling will not accept entries without all the necessary information. If you try to enter an incomplete contribution, a prompt will appear telling you what information is needed.

### Occupation/Employer

For corporate and PAC contributors, the "Employer/Business" field should be left blank.

When entering donations from retirees, you can enter "Retired" in the OCCUPATION field and enter "n/a" in the EMPLOYER and PLACE OF BUSINESS field. The same can apply when entering donations from homemakers or students.

In an ideal world, candidates and committees would gather the occupation/employer information for each donor as the checks were received. SBE recognizes that in the real world checks arrived unsolicited or without occupation information requested. In some cases, you may receive donations from individuals and companies you know little about.

If the amount is more than \$100, you must contact the donor to obtain the necessary information. If you cannot reach the donor, you should the donor a letter explaining that you are required to provide his occupation/employer information and formally request the information from him. Copies of such letters, preferably in Microsoft Word, should be mailed to SBE by the filing deadline. .

If the amount from a donor whose occupation/employer is not known falls below \$100, you can simply type an "N/A" in the "occupation", "employer" and "place of business fields." This "N/A" will serve as a placeholder if/until subsequent gifts lift the donor's aggregate over \$100. At that time, you can do the research necessary to determine the donor's occupation, employer and city/state location of their employer. . If you cannot reach the donor, you should the donor a letter explaining that you are required to provide his occupation/employer information and formally request the information from him. Copies of such letters, preferably in Microsoft Word, should be mailed to SBE by the filing deadline. .

Best Practices: Please distinguish between a donor's "title" and "occupation." For example, the vice president of Roanoke Roofing Corp. should not have her occupation listed as "vice president." A better description would be "Roofing Contractor."

## **Section 4.4 - Aggregating Contributions**

VAFiling automatically calculates the total amount of money that each contributor has given or loaned to a campaign during an election cycle. The aggregates are recalculated each time you add or edit a contribution record. Aggregate contributions are a running total, increasing after each contribution.

To ensure accuracy, keep these points in mind:

Enter all Contributions for Election Cycle: VAFiling calculates aggregates based on information entered into your database. If you do not enter all transactions, the software will not be able to calculate the proper aggregates.

**\*\* VAFiling Tip \*\***

*Candidates who began using VAFiling after the "Begin Date" of the current year/cycle must keypunch all donations dating to the start of the election cycle. The same is true for political committees who begin using the software after already having filed at least one report that covers part of the current year.*

Aggregate Contributions is a combined total of Cash and In-Kind Donations: Under state law, cash and in-kind donations are combined when determining a donor's aggregate. If a donor has given both cash and services, make sure the name is entered exactly the same on both Schedules A and B. If there is any difference -- however slight -- the system will not combine the two types of contributions.

Standardize Donor Names/Addresses: VAFiling calculates aggregate contributions with a query that looks for exact matches in five fields: Last Name, First and Middle Names, Suffix, Street, City, State and Zip.

Make sure you differentiate between father and son by assigning each of them a different suffix. In rare cases where two contributors have exactly the same name, you could differentiate them by spelling out the middle name of one contributor and using only the middle initial for the other.

You should establish some basic data-entry policies. For instance, you might want to establish a policy that donor names are written exactly as they appear on the checks. You might want to follow rules for abbreviating or not abbreviating certain common names like "Virginia." These rules will ensure donor names are standardized, particularly if more than one person performs the data entry.

**\*\* VAFiling Tip \*\***

*Pay attention to address changes for donors and vendors. The same donor listed with different addresses will cause the donor's name to appear twice in the teal look-up window. When a donor or vendor's address changes, you click on VIEW/EDIT and select the appropriate schedule. The names will be listed in alphabetical order. Find all of the transactions for the donor/vendor in question. Change the address to the current address for all transactions.*

**Section 4.5 - Unitemized Contributions**

In the days of paper reports, campaign workers had to keep two lists of givers -- those who gave enough to have their names listed on state reports and those who gave less \$100 or less. VAFiling eliminates that bifurcated system.

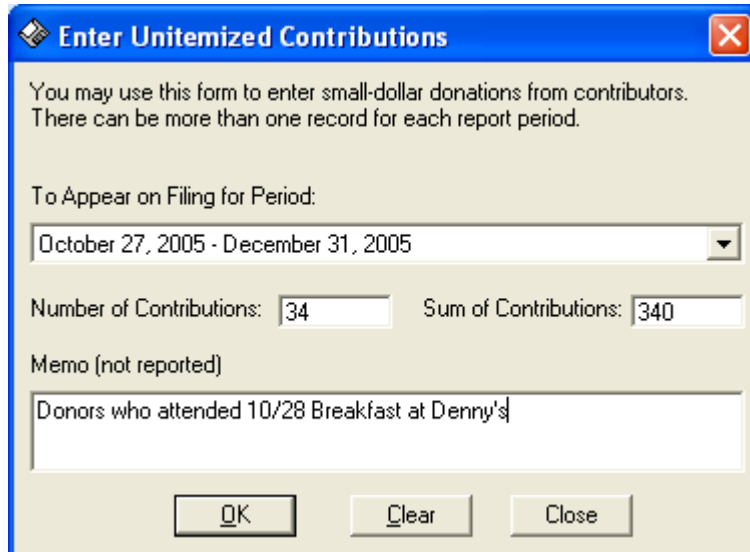
To take full advantage of VAFiling, your committee should enter all contributions into the Schedule A and Schedule B forms, even those that fall below the itemization level of \$100. This may involve more work in the short-term, but save time and help ensure accuracy in the long-term.

However, there are special circumstances where committees receive small-dollar checks from a large number of donors who have not and are unlikely to give more than \$100 during the election cycle (for candidates) or during the current year (for political committees). VAFiling gives committees the flexibility of entering small-dollar donations with no names attached.

**Note:** The State Board of Elections requires campaigns to keep records with the identity of every contributor, even those who gave small amounts. If you have not recorded this information in VAFiling, you must keep it elsewhere so that if any of the donors later break the threshold their names can be entered in Schedule A and/or Schedule B.

To access this function, chose one of three routes:

1. Click on **ADD DATA** → **UNITEMIZED CONTRIBUTIONS** on the Menu.
2. Press <Alt><J> on your keyboard to display the Jump! menu. Click on "Add" Unitemized Contributions.



**Enter Unitemized Contributions**

You may use this form to enter small-dollar donations from contributors. There can be more than one record for each report period.

To Appear on Filing for Period:

October 27, 2005 - December 31, 2005

Number of Contributions: 34 Sum of Contributions: 340

Memo (not reported)

Donors who attended 10/28 Breakfast at Denny's

OK Clear Close

- Step 1:** Select the reporting period when the contributions were received.
- Step 2:** Enter the Total Number of Contributions and Total Amount of Contributions
- Step 3:** In the Memo field, make a notation to keep track of the source of the small dollar donations.
- Step 4:** To save the contribution, click OK.

## Section 4.6 - Schedule C - Rebates, Refunds & Interest

This schedule is used to record miscellaneous income – interest earned on bank deposits and expenditures previously recorded in Schedule D that were later rebated or refunded. The schedule is also used to record when a committee receives repayment of a loan made to another candidate.

To access this function, chose one of three routes:

1. Click on **ADD DATA** → **C: REBATES REFUNDS & INTEREST** on the Menu.
2. Press <Alt><A> on your keyboard to display the drop down menu. Then press <C>.
3. Press <Alt><J> on your keyboard to display the Jump! menu. Click on "Add" Rebates Refunds Interest.

**Schedule C - Rebates, Refunds and Interest**

Use this form for entering miscellaneous credits to your account, such as refunded contributions, refunded deposits, rebates and bank interest.

Last Name (or Company Name) First and Middle Names Suffix Title

Street Address - First Line Street Address - Second Line

City State Zip Code

VA [Virginia]

Date Dollar Amount Reason/Type of Receipt

Memo (not reported):

OK Clear Close

## Section 4.7 - Schedule D – Expenditures

This schedule is used to record expenditures made from the campaign treasury. The only exception is checks written to repay loans, which are entered on Schedule E.

To access this function, chose one of three routes:

4. Click on **ADD DATA** → **D: EXPENDITURES** on the Menu.
5. Press <Alt><A> on your keyboard to display the drop down menu. Then press <D>.
6. Press <Alt><J> on your keyboard to display the Jump! menu. Click on "Add" Expenditures.

**Schedule D - Itemization of Expenditures**

Enter expenditures made by the committee. For repeat vendors, use the lookup feature to speed the data entry process.

Last Name (or Company Name) First and Middle Names Suffix Title

Archibold Harry Sr.

Archibold, Harry Sr., 12 Main St., , Chesterfield, VA, 23224-3333, Mary Jones and David Niven in the Balanc

Street Address - First Line Item or Service

12 Main St. Paint

Street Address - Second Line Name of Person Authorizing Expenditure

City State Zip Code

Chesterfield VA (Virginia) 23224-3333

Date Dollar Amount

4/2/99 250.25

Memo (not reported):

OK Clear Exit

**Best Practices:** When describing the purpose of an expense, try to avoid vague or general descriptions. For example, instead of simply listing “Reimbursement” provide more specifics such as “Reimbursement for Cell Phone.”

**Best Practices:** Virginia law requires that all credit card expenses be itemized. Be sure to review the laws governing the reporting of expenditures:

**Candidates:**

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Cidates\\_Committees/Laws\\_Policies/Cidate\\_Campaign\\_Committee\\_Law\\_Policy\\_Summary.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Cidates_Committees/Laws_Policies/Cidate_Campaign_Committee_Law_Policy_Summary.html)

**Political Committees:**

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Cidates\\_Committees/Laws\\_Policies/Political\\_Committee\\_Summary\\_on\\_the\\_Laws\\_Policies.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Cidates_Committees/Laws_Policies/Political_Committee_Summary_on_the_Laws_Policies.html)

## Section 4.8 - Schedule E – Loans

This schedule is used to record loans received by the campaign and the campaign’s repayment of loans. The two different transactions are entered the same way with one exception – the LOAN TRANSACTION drop-down menu in the bottom left corner of the screen.

For the software to compute accurate loan balances, the user must enter all loan receipts and repayments for any outstanding loans. This would include any loans or repayments that took place in a previous election cycle or before the committee began using VAFiling.

To access this function, chose one of three routes:

1. Click on **ADD DATA** → **E: LOANS** on the Menu.
2. Press <Alt><A> on your keyboard to display the drop down menu. Then press <E>.
3. Press <Alt><J> on your keyboard to display the Jump! menu. Click on "Add" Loans (Contributions -  
- For Loans Receive) and (Disbursements - for Loans Repaid).

**Schedule E - Loans Received and Loan Repayments**

Last Name (or Company Name) of Lender      First and Middle Names of Lender      Suffix      Title of Lender

Street Address of Lender - First Line      Street Address of Lender - Second Line

City of Lender      State of Lender      Zip Code of Lender

Last Name (or Company Name) of Co-Borrower      First and Middle Names of Co-Borrower      Suffix      Title of Co-Borrower

Street Address of Co-Borrower - First Line      Street Address of Co-Borrower - Second Line

City of Co-Borrower      State of Co-Borrower      Zip Code of Co-Borrower

Loan Transaction      Date Received      Dollar Amount

Receipt  
Repayment

OK      Clear      Close

**Note:** Pay close attention to the "Loan Transaction" box in the lower left corner. Select "Receipt" when entering a loan received by the campaign. Select "Repayment" when entering the repayment of a previous loan.

**\*\* VAFiling Tip \*\***

*An outstanding loan balance is considered an unpaid debt. VAFiling does not automatically transfer loan balances to the debt schedule. Therefore, all outstanding loan balances must also be entered in Schedule F – Debts Remaining Unpaid.*

## Section 4.9 - Schedule F - Debts Remaining Unpaid

This schedule is used to record outstanding loan balances and any other obligations that remain unpaid at the close of a reporting period.



**Important Note:** For all other schedules, VAFiling generates disclosure reports by querying the data for transactions that fall within specific dates. This date-specific query does not work with debts, because an obligation can be incurred before the current reporting period or even before the current election cycle.

As a result, VAFiling is programmed to include all data in Schedule F in the disclosure reports, regardless of the date. You must delete each record in Schedule F once the obligation has been satisfied. Failure to delete satisfied obligations will cause them to continue to appear on future reports.

To access this function, chose one of three routes:

1. Click on **ADD DATA** → **E: DEBTS REMAINING UNPAID** on the Menu.
2. Press <Alt><A> on your keyboard to display the drop down menu. Then press <F>.
3. Press <Alt><J> on your keyboard to display the Jump! menu. Click on "Add" Outstanding Debts.

### **Section 4.10 – Schedules G and H - Report Summaries**



VAFiling automatically inserts the data on Schedules G and H. These schedules are covered in detail in Sections 6.1 and 6.2.

### **Section 4.11 - Schedule I - Other Surplus Funds Paid Out**

This schedule is used to record the disposition of surplus committee funds. Schedule I is used only when filing a FINAL report closing out your account with the State Board of Elections.

To access this function, chose one of three routes:

1. Click on **ADD DATA** → **I: OTHER SURPLUS FUNDS PAID OUT** on the Menu.
2. Press <Alt><A> on your keyboard to display the drop down menu. Then press <I>.
3. Press <Alt><J> on your keyboard to display the Jump! menu. Click on "Add" Surplus Funds.

 **Schedule I - Other Surplus Funds Paid Out** 

Use this schedule only when filing a Final Report.

Last Name (or Company Name)	First and Middle Names	Suffix	Title
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Street Address - First Line	Item or Service	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Street Address - Second Line	Name of Person Authorizing Expenditure	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
City	State	Zip Code
<input type="text"/>	VA (Virginia)	<input type="text"/>

Date Received	Dollar Amount
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Memo (not reported):

## Section 5: REVIEWING, EDITING, AND DELETING DATA

After entering data, it's a good policy to review for accuracy/completeness and make any necessary changes. VAFiling provides two options for reviewing your work: By printing out transactions on each schedule and by viewing the transactions on screen.

In addition, VAFiling users who have a licensed copy of Microsoft Access have the ability to export the data to other formats, where it can be reviewed.

### Section 5.1- Printing Paper Reports

The State Board of Elections recommends that all users – even e-filers – print and save a paper copy of each disclosure report. This will give you a hard copy for your files and a ready reference for subsequent reports.

You can use these paper reports to check for accuracy, particularly the summary pages. Make sure that the beginning balance of your current report matches the ending balance of your most recent report. Failure to reconcile these balances will make it extremely difficult to reconcile your account at the end of a campaign or end of the calendar year.

**Note:** The current version of VAFiling does not generate a cover sheet. These can be downloaded from the State Board of Elections web site:

#### **Candidates:**

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Candidates/Committees/Candidate\\_Reporting\\_Forms.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Candidates/Committees/Candidate_Reporting_Forms.html)

#### **Political Committees:**

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Candidates/Committees/Political\\_Committee\\_Reporting\\_Forms.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Candidates/Committees/Political_Committee_Reporting_Forms.html)

To print a Schedule, follow these steps:

**Step 1:** Make sure the "Filing Period" selected in the PROFILE is the period you would like to print.

**Step 2:** Click on PREPARE C&E REPORT and select the appropriate schedule. This will open a view box like the one for Schedule D shown below:

**Print Preview (Screen page numbers do not equal printer page numbers)**

First Page Next Page Print Document

**Schedule D: EXPENDITURES** Page 1 of 1  
Committee to Elect Elvris Reporting Period January 1, 2005 - April 22, 2005

Person or Company Paid	Complete Mailing Address Include Zip	Item or Service	Name of Person Authorizing Expenditure	Date of Expenditure	Amount Paid
Verizon	P.O. Box 34890 Baltimore MD 30821	Phone Service	The Candidate	1/14/2005	\$24.34
Daniel, Elizabeth Barry	204 Main Street Suite 4 Bedford VA 24014	Secretarial Support	The Candidate	2/14/2005	\$400.00
Office Depot	Seminole Trail Plaza Unit 4 Charlottesville VA 23404	Office Supplies	The Candidate	2/14/2005	\$38.83
Verizon	P.O. Box 34890 Baltimore MD 30821	Phone Service	The Candidate	3/14/2005	\$37.24

SBE-914D REV 10/00

**Step 3:** Click "PRINT DOCUMENT" in the upper left corner. This will open a screen shown below.

**Select Page Range for Schedule D**

Page Range

☒ All Total number of pages : 1

☐ Pages  To

Number Of Copies:

**Step 4:** Select range of pages desired and number of copies of each page. Click PRINT.

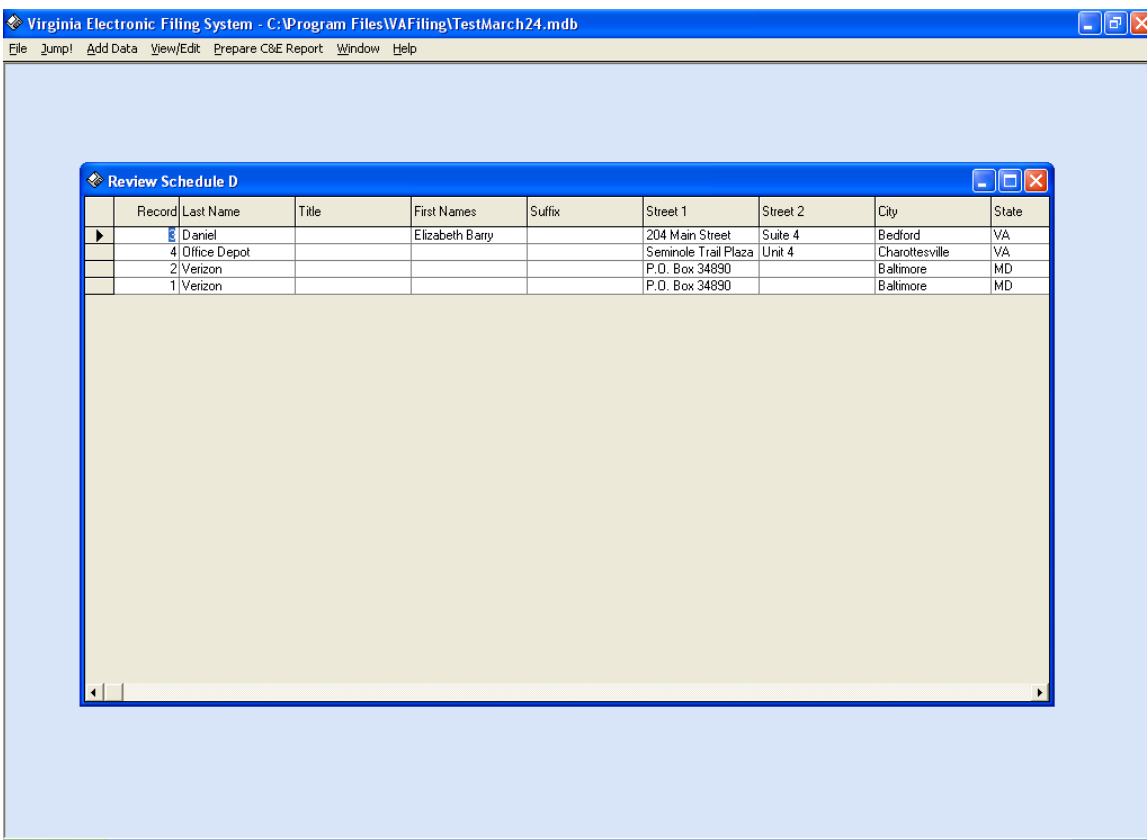
**Step 5:** You will see a prompt that says "Print Complete." Click OK.

**\*\* VAFiling Tip \*\***

*Those candidates who are filing paper reports should file only those schedules for which there are transactions during the period. There is no need to include blank schedules. For example, you should not include a blank copy of Schedule B if your campaign received no in-kind gifts during the period. In fact, VAFiling will not print schedules for which there is no data.*

## Section 5.2 - On-Screen Viewing


VAFiling allows you to view transactions on the screen. The records show each schedule displayed in a grid, listed alphabetically by last name. An example of the grid view for Schedule A is shown below:



The screenshot shows the 'Virginia Electronic Filing System' window with a menu bar (File, Jump!, Add Data, View/Edit, Prepare C&E Report, Window, Help). A 'Review Schedule D' window is open, displaying a grid of transaction records. The grid has columns for Record, Last Name, Title, First Names, Suffix, Street 1, Street 2, City, and State. The records are listed alphabetically by last name.

Record	Last Name	Title	First Names	Suffix	Street 1	Street 2	City	State
3	Daniel		Elizabeth Barry		204 Main Street	Suite 4	Bedford	VA
4	Office Depot				Seminole Trail Plaza	Unit 4	Charlottesville	VA
2	Verizon				P.O. Box 34890		Baltimore	MD
1	Verizon				P.O. Box 34890		Baltimore	MD

### Maneuvering on the Screen:

The view grid contains more fields (or vertical columns) than can fit on the screen, left to right. Click on the  box in the upper right corner to expand the screen and show as many fields as possible.

To browse the fields from left to right, use the navigation bar at the bottom of the screen. To move the cursor across the grid, click into a cell and use the directional arrow keys on your keyboard, located between your main keyboard and the number pad.

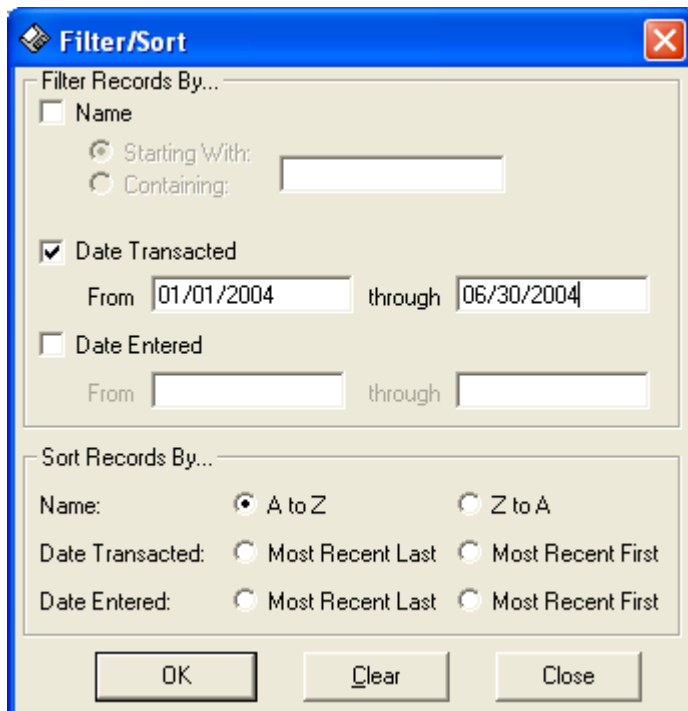
If part of the information is cut off because the column length is too narrow, move the cursor to the column heading and place the cursor on the vertical lines separating the fields. Your cursor will change shape, forming a dark vertical line with arrows pointing left and right. Click and drag the column to desired width.

## Section 5.3 - Filtering/Sorting Data

Over time, the number of transactions will grow to the point where it is difficult to find a particular transaction by simply viewing a schedule. VAFiling allows you to filter the view so that you see only those records you select, according to one or more criteria.

**Step 1:** Open a view by clicking on VIEW/EDIT and selecting a Schedule.

**Step 2:** While the view is open, click on VIEW/EDIT → FILTER/SORT. This will open the screen shown below:



The image shows a "Filter/Sort" dialog box with a blue title bar and a close button (X) in the top right corner. The dialog is divided into two main sections: "Filter Records By..." and "Sort Records By...".

**Filter Records By...**

- ☐ Name
  - ☒ Starting With:
  - ☐ Containing:
- ☒ Date Transacted
  - From  through
- ☐ Date Entered
  - From  through

**Sort Records By...**

- Name: ☒ A to Z ☐ Z to A
- Date Transacted: ☐ Most Recent Last ☐ Most Recent First
- Date Entered: ☐ Most Recent Last ☐ Most Recent First

At the bottom of the dialog are three buttons: "OK", "Clear", and "Close".

**Step 3:** Select one or more Filter Options by clicking on one or more of the options:

**Name:** Click on the NAME box. Next, choose whether to limit the filter to (a) those whose LAST names begin with a letter or word or (b) those whose LAST names contain a string of letters anywhere within the name. (If you typed "Medical" in this second option, you'd get names like "Virginia Medical PAC" and "Medical Outcomes Inc." etc.)

**Date Transacted:** Click on the checkmark box to limit transactions that fell within a particular date range. This option is particularly helpful in reviewing transactions for a particular reporting period.

**Date Entered:** Click on the checkmark box to limit search to transactions keyed within specific date range. This option is helpful in reviewing work entered on a particular day.

**Step 4:** You may choose to select to sort the results in one of six ways:

- Last Name (A-Z)
- Last Name (Z-A)
- Date Transacted (Most Recent Last)
- Date Transacted (Most Recent First)
- Date Entered (Most Recent Last)
- Date Entered (Most Recent First)

**Step 5:** Click OK.

## Section 5.4 - Editing Data

There are two ways you can change or correct information entered into your database. Open the grid for the selected schedule (VIEW/EDIT → SCHEDULE \_). Once you find a record you wish to amend, you can use one of these two steps:

**Editing in the Grid:** Click into a cell of the targeted record and navigate to the column in which the information needs editing. Make changes. Close the grid.

**Editing in the Schedule Form:** Highlight a record in the grid and double-click on the black triangle in the shaded area on the far left border. This will take you to the Form, where the information can be edited. Click the EDIT button.

**Section 5.5 - Deleting Data**

You can delete an entire record of information, one record at a time.

- Step 1:** Open the grid for a selected schedule (VIEW/EDIT → SCHEDULE \_).
- Step 2:** Highlight the selected transaction by clicking the shaded area on the far left border. The entire record will be highlighted in blue.
- Step 3:** Press the "Delete" key on your keyboard.
- Step 4:** A prompt will ask, "Do you want to delete the selected record?" Click "Yes" and then "OK."



## Section 6: PREPARING DISCLOSURE REPORTS

VAFiling generates the disclosure reports that committees and candidates must submit to the State Board of Elections. Most candidates must report twice a year in non-election years and seven times a year during election years. Political committees must report twice a year, with additional pre-election reports required for those committees that donate prescribed amounts to candidates running in the election.

### Section 6.1 - Schedule G - Statement of Funds

Schedule G provides a summary of transactions – contributions, expenditures, loans, etc. – that occurred within a filing period. To select a particular filing period, go to VIEW/EDIT → PROFILE and, in the bottom right corner, choose from the pull-down menu labeled “Filing Period.”

The numbers on Schedule G cannot be changed on the screen. The numbers on each line are generated by transactions entered in the other schedules that have been entered for the filing period. For instructions on making changes, see section 6.3 below.

To access Schedule G, choose one of three routes:

- On the navigation bar, click VIEW/EDIT → SCHEDULE G STATEMENT OF FUNDS
- Press <Alt><V> on your keyboard to display the drop down menu. Then press <G>.
- On the navigation bar, click JUMP! and, on the resulting screen, click "REVIEW CFDA SUMMARY".

Virginia Electronic Filing System - C:\Program Files\VA\Filing\Test\March24.mdb

File Jump! Add Data View/Edit Prepare C&E Report Window Help

**Schedule G - Statement of Funds** Close

Filing Period: January 1, 2005 - April 22, 2005

Schedule G		Schedule H	
	Number of Contributors		Amount
<b>CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED THIS PERIOD</b>			
1. Schedule A (Over \$100)	# 0	\$	0.00
2. Schedule B (In-Kind over \$100)	# 0	\$	0.00
3. Un-itemized (\$100 or less)	# 0	\$	0.00
4. Unitemized in-kind contributions (\$100 or less)	# 1	\$	50.00
5. Total [Add Lines 1, 2, 3 and 4]			
[also enter on Line 17a on Schedule H]			
	# 1	\$	50.00
<b>REBATES, REFUNDS AND INTEREST RECEIVED THIS PERIOD</b>			
6. Schedule C [also enter on Line 17b on Schedule H]		\$	0.00
<b>EXPENDITURES MADE THIS PERIOD</b>			
7. Schedule B [From line 2 Above]		\$	0.00
8. Un-itemized In-Kind contributions [From line 4 Above]		\$	50.00
9. Schedule D [Expenditures]		\$	500.41
10. TOTAL [add Lines 7, 8 and 9]		\$	550.41
[also enter on Line 18a on Schedule H]			
		\$	550.41
<b>RECONCILIATION OF LOAN ACCOUNT</b>			
11. Beginning loan balance [from Line 15 of last report]		\$	0.00
12. Add: Loans received this period [from Schedule E - Part I]		\$	0.00
13. SUBTOTAL [Add Lines 11 and 12]		\$	0.00
14. Subtract: Loans repaid this period [from Schedule E - Part II]		\$	0.00
15. Ending loan balance [subtract Line 14 from Line 13]		\$	0.00

The numbers on Schedule G cannot be changed on the screen. The numbers are generated by transactions entered in the other schedules. For instance, if you entered 5 cash donations of \$200 each during the period, Line 1 will show “5” contributions valued at total of “\$2,000”

The one exception to this rule is Line 11: Beginning Loan Balance. This number is determined by the Preset Values, which is discussed in detail in Section 2.9. The Beginning Loan Balance is generated automatically from your most recent report. If the number on Line 11 is in error, you can change it manually by going to ADD DATA → PRESET VALUES.

**\*\* VAFiling Tips \*\***

*In-Kind Gifts are listed as both contributions (Lines 2 and 4) and expenditures (Lines 7 and 8). Counting in-kinds both ways is the only way to make accounts balance. Think of it this way: If you were to buy a computer, someone would have to donate the money (shown as a contribution) and then you'd have to buy a computer (shown as an expense). Without in-kinds counting also as expenses, a donated computer valued at \$1,000 would make it appear the campaign had money which it could never spend.*

*Beginning Loan Balance are determine by “Preset Values,” which are explained in detail in Section 2.9*

## Section 6.2 - Schedule H Summary of Receipts/ Disbursements

Schedule H provides a starting and ending balance for the filing period and a running total of receipts and expenditures since the start of the election cycle (candidates) or the calendar year (political committees.)

To access Schedule H, chose one of three routes:

- On the navigation bar, click VIEW/EDIT → SCHEDULE H: SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
- Press <Alt><V> on your keyboard to display the drop down menu. Then press <H>.
- On the navigation bar, click JUMP! and, on the resulting screen, click "REVIEW CFDA SUMMARY" and click to the "Schedule H" tab.

The screenshot shows the Virginia Electronic Filing System interface. The main window is titled "Schedule G - Statement of Funds" and displays the filing period "January 1, 2005 - April 22, 2005". The window is divided into two tabs: "Schedule G" and "Schedule H". The "Schedule H" tab is active, showing the following data:

Line	Description	Amount
16	Beginning balance [from Line 19 of last report]	\$ 15.00
<b>17. Receipts for reporting period:</b>		
a	Add: Contributions received this period [from Line 5 of Schedule G]	\$ 50.00
b	Add: Rebates, refunds and interest [from Line 6 of Schedule G]	\$ 0.00
c	Add: Loans received this period [from Line 12 of Schedule G]	\$ 0.00
d	Subtotal: Contributions and Receipts received this period [Sum 17a, 17b and 17c]	\$ 50.00
e	Total expendable funds [add lines 16 and 17d]	\$ 65.00
<b>18. Disbursements for reporting period:</b>		
a	Expenditures made this period [from Line 10 on Schedule G]	\$ 550.41
b	Add: Loans repaid this period [from Line 14 on Schedule G]	\$ 0.00
c	Add: Other surplus funds paid out [from Schedule I]	\$ 0.00
d	Total payments made [Add Lines 18a, 18b and 18c]	\$ 550.41
19	Ending balance [Subtract Line 18d from Line 17e]	\$ -485.41
20	Total Unpaid Debts [from Schedule F of this report]	\$ 0.00
<b>COMMITTEE'S Receipts and Disbursements - Election Cycle Totals</b>		
21	Balance at Start of Cycle	\$ 15.00
22	Totals Receipts from Last Report [Line 24 from last report]	\$ 0.00
23	Receipts from Current Reporting Period [Line 17d above]	\$ 50.00
24	Total Receipts from Election Cycle [Add lines 22 and 23]	\$ 50.00
25	Total funds available [Add lines 21 and 24]	\$ 65.00
26	Total Disbursements from Last Report [Line 28 from last report]	\$ 0.00
27	Disbursements from current reporting period [Line 18d above]	\$ 550.41
28	Total Disbursements this Election Cycle [Add lines 26 and 27]	\$ 550.41
29	Ending Balance [Subtract line 28 from line 25 - Difference must match line 19]	\$ -485.41

The top portion of Schedule H provides an account balance at the start of the filing period and, after the addition of new revenue and subtraction of expenditures, an account balance at the end of the filing period.

The bottom portion of Schedule H was redesigned in 2004 to comply with changes to the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act. The key change was a requirement that each candidate and committee provide a "Balance at Start of Cycle." (Please see Section 2.10 for a complete discussion of this number.)

The numbers on Schedule H cannot be changed on the screen. The numbers on each line are generated by transactions entered in the other schedules that have been entered for the filing period. For instructions on making changes, see Troubleshooting in Section 6.3 below.

The redesigned Schedule H makes it easier for candidates and committees to reconcile its ending balance. Line 19 (Ending Balance) must equal Line 29 (Ending Balance.) In fact, VAFiling will not allow you to create an electronic report if these numbers are not exactly equal. For tips on reconciling these numbers, see Troubleshooting in Section 6.3 below.

**\*\* VAFiling Tips \*\***

*Total Unpaid Debts (Line 20) should include all unpaid loan balances. Line 20 is determined by the value of entries on Schedule F: Debts Remaining Unpaid. Once a debt is repaid, the entry should be deleted from Schedule F. (See Section 4.9)*

### **Section 6.3 - Reconciling Summary Numbers**

The State Board of Elections recommends that treasurers preparing Schedule H take great care to ensure that Line 19 = Line 29. Failure to do so will cause the SBE or local registrar to reject your report. In fact, the software will not allow you to create an electronic report in which Line 19 does not equal Line 29. Allowing your account to get out of balance will only postpone a much more painful reckoning when the time comes to turn the duties over to a new treasurer or close out your account.

Below are some general approaches to make sure your reports are complete and accurate:

#### Maintain Copies of Financial Records

Enter all checks written into a register and make photocopies of all checks received. These records will be invaluable if you need to double-check figures for a filing period.

#### Print Copies of Each Schedule

After entering all transactions (contributions, expenditures, loans, etc.) for a filing period, you should print out a copy of all schedules involved. Many people find it easier to review work on paper rather than on the screen. For Printing instructions, see Section 5.1.

Compare the amount of each transaction entered in VAFiling with your financial records. Make sure no transactions are missing or double-entered. To amend or delete records, see Section 5.

If your candidate/committee has a large number of small donors that would not normally show up on Schedule A or B, you might want to reset the "itemization threshold" so that these contribution schedules print all transactions, regardless of the amount. Click on VIEW/EDIT -> PROFILE and under "Itemization Threshold" click on the button for "Itemize All Contributions."

**Note:** After you print, make sure to reset the Itemization Threshold to "Itemize if Aggregate is over \$100" before preparing your report for the State Board of Elections.

### *Troubleshooting*

**Problem:** Line 19 does not equal Line 29. How can I figure out where I went wrong?

**Solution:** If these two lines do not match, the only possible problem is that one of two numbers in your Preset Values is incorrect. To access these numbers, click ADD DATA → PRESET VALUES.

First, make sure the “Previous Filing Period” selected is correct. This should be the filing period immediately prior to the current filing period. Leave this blank if this is the first report using VAFiling.

Next, double-check the accuracy of the following two values:

- **“Balance at Start of Election Cycle”**

This is the amount of money in your account when the committee’s current election cycle began. (If you are unsure of this date, click VIEW/EDIT → PROFILE and look for date in the bottom right corner of the form.) The balance at start of election cycle remains constant throughout an election cycle (candidate committees) or calendar year (political committees). This balance should change only when reporting transactions that fall within a new election cycle (candidate committees) or new calendar year (political committees).

- **“Beginning Balance”**

This is the amount of money you reported at the end of the last reporting period. This value appeared on Line 19 and Line 29 of the last report the committee filed. This number is likely to change from report to report.

Once you have corrected these numbers, click OK. Then click VIEW/EDIT → SCHEDULE H and see if Line 19 and 29 now match.

If the problem continues, please email your questions to [cfda@sbe.virginia.gov](mailto:cfda@sbe.virginia.gov) or support@vpap.org...

**Problem:** The starting balance – Schedule H, Line 16 – is incorrect. How do I change it?

**Solution:** Line 16 is one of five numbers that come from what are known as “Preset Values.” Line 16 cannot be edited on Schedule G or H, but can only be changed on the Preset Values screen, which you can reach by clicking ADD DATA → PRESET VALUES.

First, make sure the “Previous Filing Period” selected is correct. This should be the filing period immediately prior to the current filing period. Leave this blank if this is the first report using VAFiling.

Next, check the “Beginning Balance”: This is the amount of money you reported at the end of the last reporting period. This value appeared on Line 19 (and Line 29) of the last report the committee filed. This number is likely to change from report to report.

Once you have corrected this number, click OK. Then click VIEW/EDIT → SCHEDULE H and see if Line 19 and 29 now match.

If the problem continues, please email your questions to [cfda@sbe.virginia.gov](mailto:cfda@sbe.virginia.gov) or support@vpap.org.

**Problem:** I can see three \$100 Schedule A donations from three different people in my database, but the transactions are not showing up when I print Schedule A. Where did they go?

**Solution:** Chances are good that the donors in question gave only \$100, which means their aggregate donations did not exceed \$100; therefore their donations are not itemized on Schedule A. You should notice that the \$300 in question is reflected on Line 3 of Schedule G.

**Problem:** I can see a \$500 donation in Schedule A in my database, but it's not reflected in the summary and it does not appear on the printed version of Schedule A.

**Solution:** Double-check the date. Chances are that there was a typo that put the date outside the reporting period.

**Problem:** The campaign paid off all its debts, but Schedule H, Line 20 continues to show outstanding obligations of \$5,200. How can I make it reflect the correct number, zero?

**Solution:** As soon as you pay off a debt, you should delete the record from Schedule F. This is the only schedule that is not date-dependent. That is because debts usually are incurred in the past, before the current filing period began. As a result, any record in Schedule F will be tallied on the amount shown on Line 20. The answer is: delete the record(s) from Schedule F by going to VIEW/EDIT → SCHEDULE F. Highlight one record at a time and press the "Delete" key on your keyboard.

## Section 6.4 - Creating Electronic Reports

Your VAFiling database will generate electronic reports that can be emailed to the State Board of Elections. The format of these reports is comma-delimited text (.txt). These reports contain the same information shown in the printed format, including only reportable transactions during the period and the summary information.

You will create a new electronic report (.txt file) for each reporting period. For most candidates and committees, these files will be very small, usually less than 10 KB.

### Steps to Create an Electronic Report

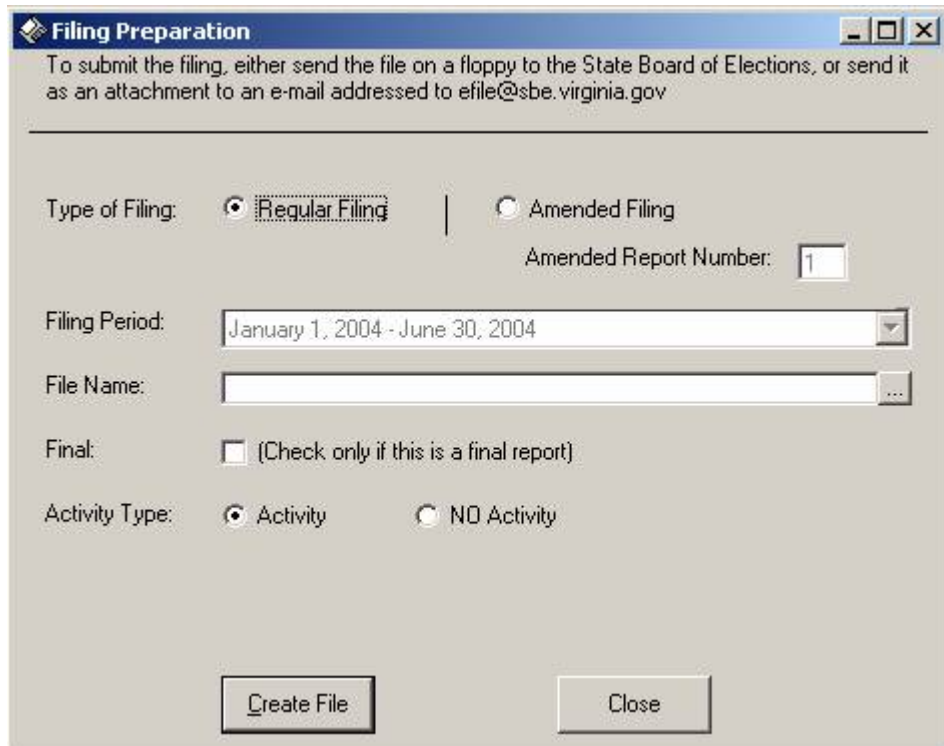
**Step 1:** Review all Schedules to confirm report is correct.

**Step 2:** Review your PROFILE to make sure you have entered your treasurer's name, candidate or committee's ID Number and six-digit Security Code. The State Board of Elections cannot accept your report without these numbers. (If you need these numbers, contact the SBE Campaign Finance Section at 804-864-8901 or Toll-Free at 800.552.9745.)

#### **\*\* VAFiling Tips \*\***

*Political committees must drop the "VA" from their ID number. For example, a political committee with the ID "VA02-012" should list the ID as "02-012"*

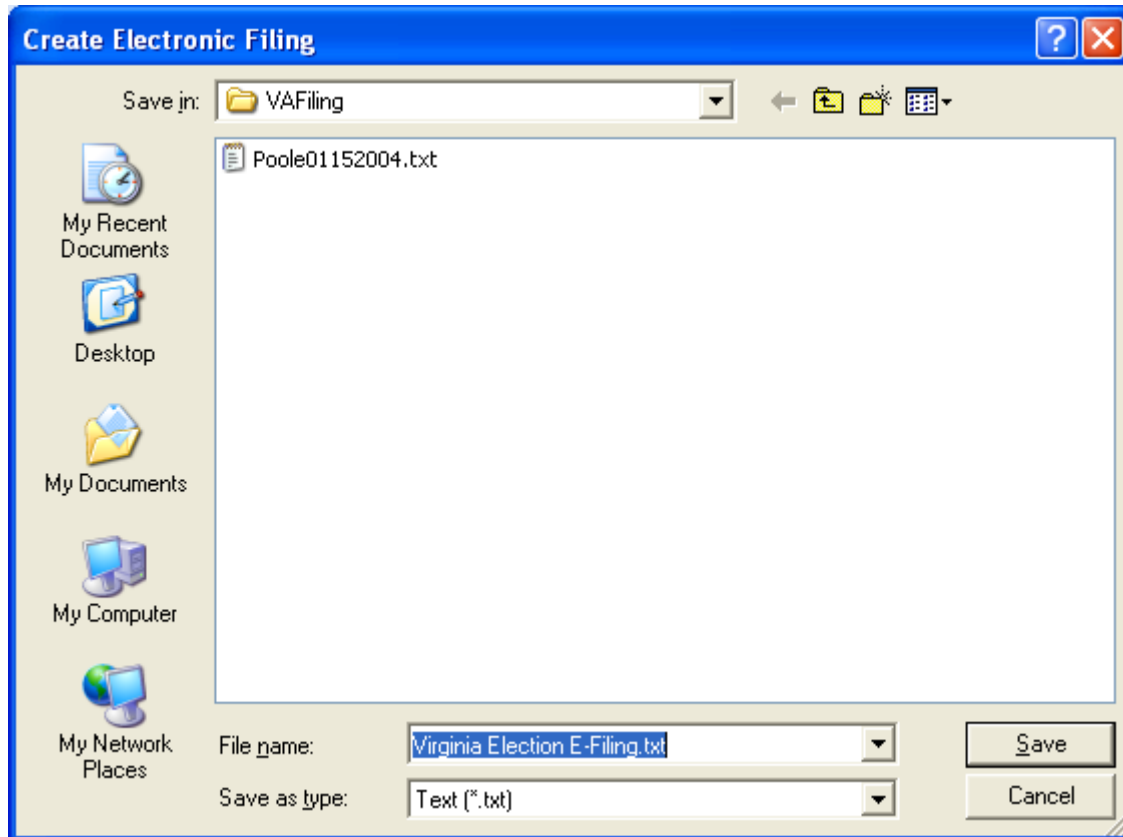
**Step 3:** On the menu bar, click on "Prepare C & E Report" → "Prepare Electronic File" This will lead to the dialogue box for Filing Preparation:



The image shows a Windows-style dialog box titled "Filing Preparation". At the top, there is a blue header bar with the title and standard window controls. Below the header, a message states: "To submit the filing, either send the file on a floppy to the State Board of Elections, or send it as an attachment to an e-mail addressed to efile@sbe.virginia.gov". The main area of the dialog contains several fields and options. "Type of Filing:" has two radio buttons: "Regular Filing" (selected) and "Amended Filing". Next to "Amended Filing" is a text field for "Amended Report Number:" containing the value "1". "Filing Period:" is a drop-down menu currently showing "January 1, 2004 - June 30, 2004". "File Name:" is a text input field with a browse button ("...") to its right. "Final:" has an unchecked checkbox with the label "(Check only if this is a final report)". "Activity Type:" has two radio buttons: "Activity" (selected) and "NO Activity". At the bottom, there are two buttons: "Create File" and "Close".

**Step 4:** Double-check that the Filing Period, shown in light script, is correct. (To change this selection, click on "Exit." Then, click on VIEW/EDIT → PROFILE. Select the appropriate period in the drop-down box and repeat Steps 3 and 4.)

**Step 5:** Select a file name by clicking on the small box to the far right of the "File Name" line. This will lead you to the dialogue box shown below.



**\*\* Required File Name Format \*\***

Since you will be creating a .txt file for each reporting period, you must select a file name that allows you to distinguish one file from the next. The acceptable name formats are:

**Candidate Committees:** The candidate's last name followed by the due date of the report. For example, the Committee to Re-elect Robert Smith should label its report due January 15, 2009 as "**Smith\_01152009.txt**". For candidates with common last names, please include the candidate's first initial as well. For example, "**Smith\_R\_01152009.txt**".

**Political Committees:** The committee's ID followed by the due date of the report. For example, a committee with a State ID of VA93-012 should name its January 15, 2009 as "**93-012\_01152009.txt**".

**Amended Reports:** Candidate committees and political committees should follow the formats above, and simply add "\_A (number)" to the end of the tag. The first amended report for "**Smith\_01152009.txt**" should be "**Smith\_01152009\_A1.txt**". The second amended report should be "**Smith\_01152009\_A2.txt**" and so on.

**Step 6:** Select whether the file will be the original for the reporting period (Regular Filing) or an Amended Filing of a report previously filed with the State Board of Elections. If it is an amended report, enter the "Amended Report Number." The first amended report should be "1" and so forth. (See instructions above for naming amended .txt files)



**\*\* VAFiling Tips \*\***

*Final Reports must show no outstanding loans and show an ending balance of Zero dollars. Electronic Filers also must submit to SBE a one-page paper cover sheet certifying the account is to be closed. A copy of the cover sheet can be downloaded from the SBE Web site:*

**Political Committees:**

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Cidates\\_Committees/Political\\_Committee\\_Reporting\\_Forms.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Cidates_Committees/Political_Committee_Reporting_Forms.html)

**Candidate Committees:**

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Cidates\\_Committees/Cidate\\_Reporting\\_Forms.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Cidates_Committees/Cidate_Reporting_Forms.html)

*The forms should be signed by the candidate or appropriate committee officer and mailed to: Campaign Finance Division, Virginia State Board of Elections, Suite 101, 200 North 9th Street, Richmond, VA 23219-3485.*

**\*\*\*Candidate Campaign Committees** must also submit a print-out of the final report and a copy of the signed Final Report cover sheet to the candidate's local registrar's office.

**Step 7:** If there is no activity during the period other bank interest or fees, click on the "NO Activity" button. (Check with Policy to determine how to handle for e-filers.)

**Step 8:** Click the "Create File" button. You will get a prompt that says, "File Created Successfully." Click OK.

**Section 6.5 - E-Filing Campaign Reports**

Once you have created an e-report (.txt file) for a specific reporting period, the final step is to upload the file to the State Board of Elections.

E-Filing is mandatory for all statewide candidates and for any political committee that anticipates raising or spending at least \$10,000 during a calendar year. Click here to see rules for political committees: <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+24.2-914.1>

At this writing, E-Filing remains optional for General Assembly candidates. However, there are several advantages to e-filing:

- General Assembly candidates who e-file with the State Board of Elections are relieved of the obligation to file a duplicate copy with their local voter registrar.
- E-Filers save taxpayers' money. SBE must pay a vendor to keypunch paper reports filed by General Assembly candidates.

Starting on July 1, 2007, e-filing will be available to local candidates who want the convenience of uploading reports online instead of hand-delivering a paper copy to their local registrar. To begin e-filing, local candidates should contact their registrar about filing an amended Statement of Organization in which they affirm their intent to e-file.

Follow the steps below to e-file with the State Board of Elections:

**Step 1:** Connect to the Internet and open a browser such as Firefox or Internet Explorer.

**Step 2:** Point your browser to the SBE Login Page:

<http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/DotNet/VAFiling/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fDotNet%2fVAFiling%2fLoadFile.aspx>

**Step 3:** Enter your Committee ID and Security Code. Click "Submit"

**Step 4:** Click on the "Browse" button and locate the e-report (.txt file) you wish to submit. The file can most often be located in the directory c:\Program Files\vafileing or c:\Program Files\Virginia Electronic Filing. Click on the file, then click "Open".

**Step 5:** Enter your e-mail address in the space provided, then click "Submit"

**Step 6:** Verify that the information now onscreen corresponds with the file you are intending to send. If it does, click "Confirm." Otherwise, click "Back to Step One" to choose a different file.

**Note:** If you encounter an error message at any time during this procedure, there is most likely an error somewhere in the .txt file. In these instances, follow the on-screen instructions to identify and fix the error, and then attempt to resubmit the file. For further assistance, contact the State Board of Elections directly at 1-800-552-9745 and ask to speak with someone in Campaign Finance.

**Step 7:** Your report has been submitted. Click "Print" to print out a hard copy of this transaction for your records. You will receive an automated reply acknowledging that SBE has received the email. If there are any problems with your report, SBE's staff will contact you in the future.

**Note:** Make sure to retain the printed copy and the SBE e-mail acknowledgment of your successful upload, in case there are any questions about the timeliness of your report.

**\*\* VAFiling Tips \*\***

*After a while, you will have several .txt files in your folder. Be careful to attach the correct file.*

## Section 7: MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

This section will explain important issues such as protecting your data from catastrophic computer failures to incorporating VAFiling in your overall data management.

### Section 7.1 - Creating New Filing Periods

Version 3.17 is loaded with all the reporting periods that the State Board of Elections has scheduled for political committees and candidates through 2010. Circumstances sometimes require new filing periods, which the State Board of Elections will available for downloading directly into your database. To begin the download, connect your computer to the Internet and click FILE → LIVE REPORT CODE UPDATE. The process should take less than a minute.

There are instances when users might want to create customized filing periods that do not correspond to official State Board of Elections deadlines. For instance, if you are filing a final report at any time other than a regular filing deadline then you will need to create a new filing period. Or the treasurer may want to see a report of transactions during a specific period of time or over the course of the committee's history.


Follow the steps below to Create New Filing Periods


- Step 1:** Open the Profile (VIEW/EDIT → PROFILE) and change "Type of Committee" to "ALL OTHERS".
- Step 2:** Click on ADD DATA → ADD NEW FILING PERIODS. You will see a dialogue box as shown below:

**Enter Filing Periods**

Selected Candidate Type: Political Committees in 2005

Period	ReportCode
January 1, 2005 - June 30, 2005	JULPJ15_05
January 1, 2005 - April 22, 2005	APRPM25_05
April 23, 2005 - June 30, 2005	JULPM15_05
January 1, 2005 - June 1, 2005	JUNP06_05
June 1, 2005 - June 30, 2005	JULP15_05
July 1, 2005 - October 26, 2005	OCTP31_05
October 27, 2005 - December 31, 2005	JANP15_06
July 1, 2005 - December 31, 2005	JANPJ15_06
April 23, 2005 - June 1, 2005	JUNPM06_05

From Date:  /  /  

To Date:  /  /  

Report Code:

Select the type of candidate:

- Step 3:** Enter the first day of the period in the field under “From Date.”
- Step 4:** Enter the last day of the period in the field under “To Date.”
- Step 5:** Enter a “Report Code”. SBE will provide you with the necessary report codes if you are running in a special election. If you are creating a report code for internal use only, the code can be any combination of 8-10 characters.
- Step 6:** Click ADD

**\*\* VAFiling Tips \*\***

*To delete a filing period, highlight a period shown in the grid and click the REMOVE button.*

*In order to file a final report at any time other than a regular reporting period, you will have to create a new filing period. You will also need to contact the State Board of Elections to obtain the correct Report Code.*

## Section 7.2 -Protecting Your Data

Computers can malfunction, causing a catastrophic loss of data. Imagine if you tried to boot up your computer this morning, only to discover that all of your files had vanished or had been corrupted by a virus. Each year, several candidates and committees lose their data because their treasurers ignored repeated warnings to take steps to back up their VAFiling databases.

The State Board of Elections strongly urges you regularly to back up your VAFiling database as part of an overall strategy to protect your computer information. You should back up your VAFiling database after each session in which you add or amend data.

Here are several options you should consider:

- If your computer is on a network, copy the files to a designated folder on your network drive each time you add or amend data.
- A USB Flash drive or an external hard drive, copy the files each time you add or amend data.
- If your computer has a read/write CD Rom, burn a copy of your database (.mdb file) each time you enter data or amend data.

**Please back up your data.**

## Section 7.3 -Large Pre-Election/Large Dollar Contribution Reports

Under state law, enhanced reporting requirements take effect in the final two weeks before a Primary Election or General Election. During this period immediately preceding an election, candidates must report certain large donations twice – first, within 24 hours of receipt and, later, in the first regular disclosure due after Election Day.

The 24-hour reporting threshold is any contribution of \$5,000 or more to statewide office; \$1,000 or more for General Assembly candidates and \$500 or more for all other candidates.

The special requirements take effect 13 days prior to Election Day for a primary or general election and 11 days before a nominating convention. (Candidates running unopposed in a nominating convention are exempt.)

State candidates who e-file must report large, pre-election contributions within 24 hours by entering them directly into a form located on the Web server of the State Board of Elections. Point your browser to

### **Candidate Committees:**

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/View\\_Large\\_Contribution\\_Reports/Login.asp](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/View_Large_Contribution_Reports/Login.asp)

Second, candidates must report these large, pre-election contributions on its post-election report.

**Large Dollar Contribution Reports are required to be reported within three business days of the date of receipt. A Large Dollar Contribution is a single contribution of \$10,000 or more from a single contributor. The committee must report these contributions on-line.**

### **Political Committees:**

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/View\\_Large\\_Contribution\\_Reports/Login.asp](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/View_Large_Contribution_Reports/Login.asp)

This leads to a page asking for your Committee Code and Security Code. (If you need these numbers, please contact the Campaign Finance Division of the State Board of Elections in Richmond at 804-864-8901 or Toll-Free at 800.552.9745.)

Once you gain entry, you will come to a form where you enter each contribution at a time.

**\*\* VAFiling Tips \*\***

*Reporting a large, pre-election contribution does not relieve you of the duty to report the same information in on the full post-election report required by the State Board of Elections.*

## **Section 7.4 -Mail Merge**

VAFiling is designed primarily to assist campaigns in filing state-required disclosure reports. It is not intended to compete with comprehensive campaign management products offered by private vendors. Candidates and committees looking for comprehensive software with an e-filing option should consult the list of vendors whose products that meet State Board of Elections criteria for e-filing: [http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Cidates\\_Committees/Electronic\\_Filing/Approved\\_Vendors.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Cidates_Committees/Electronic_Filing/Approved_Vendors.html).

Nonetheless, many candidates and committees have been able to integrate VAFiling by varying degrees into their overall data management. Some candidates have used the data entered into VAFiling to generate mailing labels/envelopes for Thank You Notes and follow-up solicitations.

This is possible because information entered into VAFiling is not locked in a proprietary system. Rather, VAFiling employs a Microsoft® Access database. Access is a database manager that is part of the complete Microsoft® Office suite.

In order to run a mail merge, a campaign must have a license for Microsoft® Access. Simply close VAFiling and open the database in Access. You may add fields at the end of each table, but **DO NOT** -- under any circumstances -- alter any of the existing fields in any table. Altering existing database structure or existing queries in **ANY WAY** will create instability in VAFiling and could cause a fatal loss of data.

**\*\* VAFiling Tips \*\***

*On the data-entry screen for each Schedule, use the "Memo" field to record information -- such as a salutation -- that can be used in a mail merge. You can store several variables in the single field, and later use an Update Query to populate some new fields. For instance, you could use a system where you'd put these values in the Memo field separated by a delimiter: Courtesy Title#Salutation#Corporate Contact Name" Create three corresponding fields at the end of the table and run an Update Query to populate the fields.*

## Section 7.5 - Importing Data into VAFiling

VAFiling makes it much easier to *export* data entered into VAFiling than to *import* data from another source into VAFiling. There is no button that says, "Import Data." Still, some campaign and committees wishing to avoid double-entering information have figured ways to append data from a central Microsoft® Access database into a VAFiling database.

The transfer process is not automated and requires more than a beginner's knowledge of Microsoft® Access. VAFiling tables have strict validation rules that, if not followed exactly, will reject importing your data.

For more information about importing data, contact David Poole at the Virginia Public Access Project, [dpool@vpap.org](mailto:dpool@vpap.org)

## Section 8: E-FILING POLICIES

### Section 8.1 - Timely Delivery

Electronically filed reports must be uploaded to SBE's website no later than 5pm on the filing deadline.

### Section 8.2 – Incomplete Reports

Upon uploading the reports, SBE will perform a validation check. If any errors are found, the report will not be accepted. Extensions will not be granted in cases where the filer cannot submit the report in a timely fashion due to these errors.

The following instances are errors found in the reports that SBE will not allow to be uploaded:

- A report will not be accepted if it is not in the proper format.
  - Reports created by approved vendors that are not in the proper format will not be accepted. SBE will not provide help desk support for errors in the format for reports created by an approved vendor.
- The proper amended count must be submitted.
- All schedules with activity must be included in the .txt file.
- The committee ID, security code, report year and report code must be correct.
- The report file's creation date must be the same date as submission or date earlier, but not prior to the end of the filing period.
- An out-of-date VAFiling program being used (the current version is 3.15).
- The ending balance of your last filed report must match the beginning balance of this report.
- Line 19 and Line 29 of Schedule H must equal.

### Section 8.3 – Security Code Accessibility

The security code for each committee acts as the signature for all of those persons listed on the committee's Statement of Organization. The security code will only be provided to those committees that sign the e-filing agreement on the committee's Statement of Organization.

The security code will not be provided to any person not listed on the e-filing agreement. In order to facilitate the timely delivery of the security code to those persons requesting it, SBE will provide the code via email **ONLY** to an email address that is listed on the committee's most recently filed Statement of Organization.

Upon receipt of an amended Statement of Organization, SBE will automatically update the committee's security code and will supply the new code to the committee in its acknowledgement of receipt of the amended Statement. It is the committee's responsibility to maintain the committee's security code and to keep it private.

SBE will update the committee's security code upon request.



**Section 8.4 - Extensions**

Extensions to the electronic filing deadline will only be considered in instances where the failure of the computer or electronic filing equipment which prevents timely delivery of the campaign finance report.

- Extensions in this case will only be granted if the filer provides the request in writing (email is acceptable) prior to the end of the filing deadline.
- The filer must provide a receipt or similar documentation of work done to repair the computer in situations where the failure of the computer caused the need for the extension.
- The extension in these cases will expire five days from the date that the filer has repaired the computer.

## **Section 9: GETTING HELP**

This handbook is designed to answer most of your questions about VAFiling. The State Board of Elections makes additional resources available to assist users.

### **Section 9.1- Online Resources**

The State Board of Elections maintains an updated list of Frequently Asked Questions and other resources on its Web site. Point your browser to:

[http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign\\_Finance\\_Disclosure/Information\\_for\\_Candidates/Committees/Electronic\\_Filing/Electronic\\_Filing.html](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Campaign_Finance_Disclosure/Information_for_Candidates/Committees/Electronic_Filing/Electronic_Filing.html)

### **Section 9.2 - Help Desk Support**

The non-partisan Virginia Public Access Project (VPAP) is available to answer questions. Contact David Poole at [dpoole@vpap.org](mailto:dpoole@vpap.org).

The State Board of Elections also provides support to statewide candidates, General Assembly candidates, political committees and local candidates. E-mail your questions to SBE at [efile@sbe.virginia.gov](mailto:efile@sbe.virginia.gov).